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VHHA in Action

Each day, VHHA actively works on behalf of its members, their employees, and Virginians to advance the interests of Virginia's hospitals and health care systems. In the past week, here are some developments of interest to Virginia hospitals and health systems:

Virginia General Assembly Nears Conclusion of the 2025 Legislative Session

- The schedule adjournment *sine die* of the **Virginia General Assembly's** 2025 regular legislative session is near. The session is set to conclude Saturday, Feb. 22, assuming lawmakers reach a compromise on legislation to amend Virginia's two-year state budget by that deadline. During this year's 46-day session, the **VHHA Government Affairs Team** has successfully worked on a variety of bills on behalf of hospitals and health systems including legislation on certificate of

public need (COPN), medical debt collection, behavioral health, pharmacy issues, insurance prior authorization reform, maternal health, medical malpractice policy, workforce development, health care professional licensure, long-term care, and more. VHHA has also actively engaged with budget negotiators and staff in support of funding for items of importance to hospitals and health systems. Following adjournment, **Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin** has 30 days to review bills, including the budget, sent to his desk and take action on them. His options include letting them become law with or without his signature, offering amendments, or issuing vetoes. The General Assembly returns to Richmond on April 2 for the reconvened session to consider amendments and vetoes from the Governor. If the federal government reforms Medicaid policy, it is possible the Governor could call a legislative special session later this year to address potential funding and coverage impacts in the Commonwealth. View a brief video recap of recent action at the legislature [here](#).

VHHA Hosts Payor Advisory Committee Meeting

- This week, VHHA held a meeting of the **Payor Advisory Committee**. The Committee is a forum for hospital payor relations and revenue cycle leaders to discuss priority issues and ongoing payor-related challenges. Contact **Craig Connors** at cconnors@vhha.com to inquire about the committee.

New Resource Added to VHHA ‘Earn While You Learn’ Workforce Development Toolkit

- A new online [resource](#) has been added to the [VHHA Earn While You Learn Toolkit](#) reflecting a newly developed plan and sample budget for providers interested in developing this clinical education program model in partnership with high school certified nursing assistant (CNA) programs. The “Earn While You Learn Clinical Education Model” (EWL CEM) is a transformative nurse clinical education model through which academic-clinical partnerships help enhance students’ confidence, clinical judgment, and skills acquisition to help prepare more practice-ready nurse graduates for employment. EWL CEM accelerates the development of practice-ready nurse graduates, creating a hiring pipeline for hospitals that can help reduce orientation costs. Nursing students who participate in the EWL CEM model work part-time at a clinical facility (12-20 hours weekly when school is in session), receive immersive 12-hour clinical rotations, working one on one with an experienced nurse mentor (preceptor) while receiving a stipend and engaging in regular mentoring meetings to consolidate learning. Additional grant dollars for Earn While You Learn are expected to be announced this [spring](#). VHHA members seeking consultation or additional technical assistance in developing EWL programs are encouraged to contact VHHA Director of Workforce Initiatives **Sharon Alexander** at salexander@vhha.com.

VHHA Solutions Partners with Crisis Prevention Institute to Offer Professional Safety Training

- Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA) affiliate [VHHA Solutions](#) has entered into a new strategic partnership with [Crisis Prevention Institute](#) (CPI), a global leader in offering evidence-based de-escalation and crisis prevention training to a wide range of organizations, including health care providers. CPI has decades of experience working with professional organizations to implement customized training solutions that create an environment of safety in which staff have the skills to recognize and prevent incidents of workplace violence. This includes a record of working with hospitals and health systems to promote safety for patients,

families, and visitors. Training offered by CPI helps health care teams prepare for potential risks by equipping them with the skills to identify and de-escalate crises in the workplace to promote organization-wide safety and well-being. VHHA Solutions will work with CPI to showcase its programs to professional organizations across Virginia. Read more [here](#).

Next Webinar in EMS Drug Kit Transition Series Scheduled for Feb. 26

- The next webinar in a series focused on the upcoming drug kit transition affecting Virginia's EMS agencies in 2025 is scheduled for Feb. 26 at 2:30 p.m. Register for that webinar, which is focused on hazardous medication waste and disposal, [here](#). The webinar series is hosted by the **Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS)** in collaboration with the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** and the **Virginia Society of Health-System Pharmacists (VSHP)**. A previous installment from the webinar series earlier this month included the **U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)** on use of the CSOS and Form 222, the **Virginia Board of Pharmacy** on EMS Audits, and the **Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services** on the decision by agencies on whether to carry medications. View a webinar recording [here](#) and presentation slides through this [link](#).

VHHA in the News

- VHHA actively engages with the news media to share public messaging and coordinate member media appearances to showcase the important work done by Virginia hospitals. That includes recent coverage from [WCAV](#).

News Updates

White House Issues 'Make America Healthy Again' Executive Order

U.S. President Donald Trump recently issued an [executive order](#) creating the Make America Healthy Again Commission that will be led by **Robert F. Kennedy Jr.**, who was recently confirmed as **U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary**. The order directs federal agencies to "aggressively combat the critical health challenges facing our citizens, including the rising rates of mental health disorders, obesity, diabetes, and other chronic diseases."

CDC Estimates 24 Million Flu Cases, More Than 300,000 Hospitalizations So Far This Season

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** estimates that at least 24 million people have had seasonal flu this season, leading to 310,000 hospitalizations, and 13,000 deaths from flu so far; the agency notes that "seasonal influenza activity remains elevated and continues to increase across the country." Read more [here](#).

CAQH Index Report Offers Insights on Savings Opportunities for Health Care Organizations

The Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH) recently issued a [report](#) highlighting how the health care industry can save \$20 billion by transitioning from manual to electronic workflows. The report also notes that the industry could save \$515 million annually on electronic prior authorizations and save providers and staff 14 minutes per transaction.

NIH Issues Supplemental Guidance on Reducing Grant ‘Indirect Cost Rates’

The **National Institutes of Health** (NIH) recently issued [supplemental guidance](#) indicating that the agency will apply a 15 percent indirect cost rate across all new and existing grant awards, in contrast to previous grant policy. The new policy will be applied to all current grants for future expenses as of Feb. 10 as well as for all new grants issued; it replaces any negotiated rates for existing grant awards. NIH also indicated it would not apply the policy retroactively, though it asserts it has that authority under federal law. Indirect cost rates apply to overhead expenses for facilities and administration and may include expenses such as operations and maintenance, building depreciation, capital improvement costs and outlays for administrative staff. NIH indicates that the average indirect cost rate has been in the 27-28 percent range, with some organizations charging 50-60 percent. This could potentially impact academic medical centers and organizations that conduct clinical research. A federal court in Massachusetts recently issued a [temporary order](#) blocking the new guidance.

CDC Issues Alert on Ebola Outbreak in Uganda, U.S. Clinician Recommendations

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) recently issued a Health Alert Network (HAN) Health Advisory about a confirmed outbreak of Ebola disease in Uganda caused by the Sudan virus (species *Orthoebolavirus sudanense*). In response the CDC is offering recommendations to U.S. public health departments and clinicians about case identification, testing, and biosafety considerations in clinical laboratories. Currently, no suspected, probable, or confirmed Ebola cases related to this outbreak have been reported in the United States, or outside of Uganda. However, as a precaution and because there are other viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) outbreaks in East Africa, CDC is sharing best practices for public health departments, public health and clinical laboratories, and health care workers in the United States to raise awareness about this outbreak. Read more [here](#). In related news, **Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Shelton, MD**, recently shared a [letter](#) with health care providers about the Ebola outbreak.

Events

The 2025 Virginia Patient Safety Summit on Feb. 27 is Less Than One Week Away

The 14th annual **Virginia Patient Safety Summit** presented by the **VHHA Center for Healthcare Excellence** and the **VHHA Foundation** is less than one week away. The virtual event is scheduled for Feb. 27 (9:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m.). The theme for the upcoming Summit is “Improvement Unleashed: Strategies for Sustainable Change.” The event will be an opportunity to highlight strategies for supporting and sustaining improvements in health care quality and safety, including the use of robust process improvement methodologies. The event is being hosted in collaboration with the **Virginia Nurses Foundation**, the **Medical Society of Virginia**, the **Virginia Pharmacists Association**, and the **Virginia Society of Health-System Pharmacists**. View event registration information [here](#).

Register for Feb. 26 Installment of Health Careers Webinar Series

VHHA, **Virginia’s Community Colleges**, and [On Board Virginia](#) are collaborating on a three-part webinar series for educators, students, and parents about health care careers and the skills and education they require. Webinars in the series focus on exploring high-demand health care roles and the education

necessary to work in those professions. The final webinar in the series is scheduled for Feb. 26 from 4-5 p.m. and its focus is hospital roles for aspiring nurses. Register for that webinar [here](#).

Register for the Third Annual VCU/RVA Aortic Symposium in March

The Third Annual VCU/RVA Aortic Symposium is scheduled for March 1 (7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.) in Richmond, VA as an event to bring together leading specialists from the Tri-Cities region, as well as renowned institutions such as **UVA Health**, **Sentara Health**, **Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS)**, and **Bon Secours**. Programming for the day will focus on the latest advancements in the field, covering critical topics such as aortic arch repairs, open and endovascular thoracoabdominal aortic surgeries, neuro monitoring, and genetic arthropathy management. This event will be an opportunity to learn and connect with other providers who care for aortic disease and will include both lectures and labs. View more event information [here](#).

Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Inova Neurosurgeon, New Brain Tumor Treatment

This episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Mateo Ziu**, a neurosurgeon from **Inova**, who joins the show to discuss his medical training journey from Europe to America, an innovative new procedure to treat patients with brain tumors, and much more. Listen to the episode [here](#) and hear past episodes through this [link](#). Podcast episodes are also available through these podcast apps and networks: [Apple Podcast](#), [Amazon Music](#), [Spotify](#), [Pandora](#), [Stitcher](#), [Tuneln](#), [SoundCloud](#), [Blubrry](#), [iHeart Radio](#), [Deezer](#), [Podbay](#), [Overcast](#), [Pocket Casts](#), the [Virginia Audio Collective](#), the [Public Health Podcast Network](#), the [World Podcast Network](#), and the [Family Podcast Network](#). The podcast can also be heard on the radio airwaves – episodes air each Sunday at noon on 100.5 FM, 107.7 FM, 92.7 FM, and 820 AM across Central Virginia and 1650 AM in Hampton Roads, 105.1 FM and 1050 AM in Lynchburg, and Wednesdays at 1 p.m. on 93.9 FM in Richmond. Send questions, comments, feedback, or guest suggestions to pcfpodcast@vhha.com.



Around the State



Dr. David Hasleton, MD, has been named Chief Clinical Officer for **Bon Secours Richmond**. He most recently served as Chief Medical Officer at Intermountain Health. He is responsible for overseeing clinical operations and provides strategic leadership to ensure the highest standards of clinical excellence, patient safety, and quality outcomes across the Richmond market. Dr. Hasleton brings more than 20 years of leadership experience in integrated health care delivery systems to the ministry, including serving most recently as chief medical officer for Intermountain

Health, where he oversaw enterprise-wide clinical and operational outcomes across five states. Dr. Hasleton earned his medical degree from the University of Illinois where he also earned his master of business administration degree. In addition, he holds a bachelor of science degree in zoology from Brigham Young University. Dr. Hasleton is also board-certified in emergency medicine, with active clinical experience as an attending physician and adjunct clinical professor at Oregon Health and Science University, and the University of Utah.

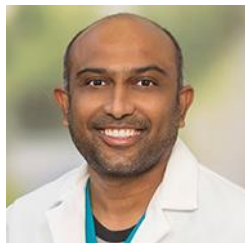
Sentara Health Senior Vice President and Chief Medical and Quality Officer

Dr. Joel Bundy, MD, is retiring after 31 years with Sentara, effective March

31. **Dr. Michael Hooper, MD**, Sentara Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, will assume the responsibilities of Dr. Bundy's position including quality, the medical staff office, credentials verification office and bioethics, while maintaining his current purview over our academic relationships and research efforts. Dr. Hooper's new title will be Chief Medical and Academic Officer. Dr. Bundy is also President of the **Medical Society of Virginia (MSV)**, was a delegate to the **American Medical Association (AMA)** for Virginia and has held various thought leadership roles in shaping the quality and safety of medicine both within the



Commonwealth and nationally, including the National Quality Forum and American College of Medical Quality. He is also a recipient of the VHHA 2024 Senior Leader Quality and Patient Safety Award. Dr. Bundy has also been recognized as a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, Fellow of the American Society of Nephrology and Fellow of the American Association for Physician Leadership. Earlier in his career, Dr. Bundy was commissioned to the United States Navy and served as a General Medical Officer at Cecil Field Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, FL and then at Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth, VA.



Bon Secours has named **Dr. Vishwas Patel, MD**, as Chief Clinical Officer for its **Hampton Roads Market**. He joined Bon Secours in 2008 as a hospitalist and has held several leadership positions, including Medical Director of the Hospitalist Program at **Bon Secours Maryview Medical Center**. Board-certified in internal medicine, Dr. Patel completed his residency at the University of Illinois after earning his medical degree from Baroda Medical College in India.